

# THE LEISURE HOUR.

BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,  
AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND.—*Compton*



CONVALESCENT.

## "WAIT A YEAR."

### CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN Mr. Sinclair's deliverers succeeded in bringing him out of the crevasse he was all but lifeless. That glimpse of a golden light pouring over the irregular points of ice and rock which met his bewildered eye when his faculties were too benumbed to understand his situation, was the last moment of partial consciousness. But he was not

dead; the guides said he would recover. Happily the accident occurred near the spot where help could be procured. As Warren had conjectured, the fallen hat attracted attention, the beaten, broken snow told the tale to the experienced Michel, whose heroism, in addition to that of the two others, who were advancing with another party, did the rest. Mr. Sinclair was rescued from his perilous position before the pulses of life had gone down too low to be revived. He was speedily conveyed to the chalet, where all

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PRICE ONE PENNY.

the means available were used to restore him, and as soon as it could be done with safety, he was conveyed to his hotel. A long illness ensued, a severe brain fever, in which the tortured mind lived its past sufferings over again. It was piteous to hear his wild wanderings, to see him shrink and cower in mental agony before terrors which no longer existed.

Sometimes he was wandering with Helen beside noisy torrents, where the water, brawling and foaming, leaped from rock to rock, or the fragrant thyme grew around the chalets, rough and shabby, that were scattered over the broken plain, and he would call upon her to join him in admiring the alternating lights and shadows. At others he was with her on the blue transparent slopes, amid the peaks and domes and snowy spires that were glistening in a variety of fanciful shapes, and reproaching her for coldness to the magnificence of nature. But all this cerebral agitation at length subsided, leaving him in a state of great weakness, from which it was feared he would not recover.

One afternoon, on awakening from a long refreshing sleep, the rustling of a dress caught his ear. "Helen, my dear Helen!" he exclaimed, attempting to put back the curtain screening him from the light, "I am glad you are come to me; I have had such bad dreams about you, but they will all go away now."

"It is not Helen, it is I," said Mrs. Lestocq, leaning forward, almost glad that it was not her daughter who was looking at that emaciated face, where the large eyes, once so soft and fine, had lost their sweetness, and looked out of their cavernous depths with harsh and startling brightness. His hair too had lost its rich brown colour, and was taking a greyish hue. Illness had altered the whole expression of his face, exaggerating its features, and leaving few traces of that intellectual nobleness of outline which had constituted its chief beauty.

"Captain Orde wrote and told us what had happened," said Mrs. Lestocq, compelled by Mr. Sinclair's earnest look to explain her daughter's absence, "but Helen was not with me; she had gone to Vienna with the Millers."

"But has not Helen been here?—I have seen her often—she sat by me sometimes—she never cared about the scenery," he made answer, in a bewildered, hesitating tone. Mrs. Lestocq would have been glad to leave him in doubt, but when, after a pause, he put the question direct, "Has she not been here at all?" she was obliged to reply, "I came as soon as I heard from your brother, and wrote to Helen, but she may not yet have received my letter. You know I told you she was away. Most probably the Millers had left Vienna before my letter arrived. They were going further, to Pesth and other places; she cannot know of your illness; she will hear of it and of your recovery at the same time, and will be spared the anxiety that we have had."

"How long have I been ill?" asked Mr. Sinclair after an interval of silence.

"About three weeks, or a little more."

He turned his face away from Mrs. Lestocq and tried to think over what she had been saying, but he was much too weak to argue himself or test the arguments of others; nor could he reckon either time or distance accurately. "I can't make it out," he said, languidly, after one or two fruitless attempts to put the pieces of information together, folding his hands in a resigned manner. "I cannot understand, but I can wait; it will come right, I dare say."

And he waited quietly, without complaining or making any further allusion to Helen. Day after day passed, bringing a little more strength and life and power to the invalid, but no news of Helen.

"Here is something at last," said Cecil Orde, as he gave Mrs. Lestocq a letter, brought to them while they sat at dinner at the *table d'hôte* in the Hôtel d'Angleterre.

It had been re-directed from the Prangin, and therefore did not hold out much hope of her being acquainted with the recent tragedy. It was a long letter, dated from some out-of-the-way place in Hungary, which Mrs. Lestocq read in the intervals between the courses, and imparted some of the contents to Cecil, the noise of newly-arrived tourists questioning their neighbours, and old ones recounting the day's exploits, mixed with the cries for *garçons*, covering the discussion of the most confidential affairs.

"Then she has not yet heard of Warren's illness?" said Cecil, endeavouring to select something eatable from a dish that had already been offered to more than half-a-dozen eager appetites.

"No—yes," said Mrs. Lestocq, shaking her head at the untempting dish, and returning to the perusal of her missive. "Yes, as I thought; she received my three letters at the same time, and supposes that, as Warren is so much better, I have returned to the Prangin. Poor Helen! I am glad she has been spared anxiety."

Cecil did not make any response for some seconds. When he did speak it was to observe that he supposed Helen did not contemplate making any change in her conditions with Warren.

"As he is getting well again she does not see any occasion for doing so," returned Mrs. Lestocq, colouring and looking down at her letter to avoid Cecil's eye, which she never could meet when he was in one of his scrutinising moods.

"I understand. Now, Mrs. Lestocq, if you will speak candidly to me I will give you a piece of advice which may be of service both to you and Helen. You wish for this marriage to take place, do you not? It will add to the comfort of your life in different ways?"

"I wish it, certainly. What mother would not be glad to have such a son-in-law as Mr. Sinclair?" she answered, readily, yet wishing Cecil would not treat the subject so brusquely.

"Then pack up and go away to-morrow. Don't let Warren know you have heard from Helen; don't let him even suspect that your letters have yet reached her. Go without seeing him, if you like, but let there be no chance of his questioning you. You might deceive Warren, perhaps, if you tried, but you had better not. If you want Helen to be Warren's wife go away before he is able to reason more clearly. By letter the danger will be less. You can find some rag of business to call you away, and I will set your maternal anxieties at rest by promising to remain with my brother as long as he wants me."

Though Cecil could not refrain from touching Mrs. Lestocq with the scalpel of his cynicism, he seriously intended to give her good counsel. He was more than willing to have Helen for his sister-in-law, and foresaw many pleasant hours for himself when the new relationship should be established. But he thought her prospects might be endangered if Mrs. Lestocq's presence gave Warren any further oppor-

CHAPTER IX.

tunity of gathering more information respecting her daughter's travels and doings. Cecil was not a man of endurance, and judged Warren by himself.

In acting according to the recommendation made her, Mrs. Lestocq played her part very well. Either Mr. Sinclair was unwilling to occupy her time or did not find her society sufficiently congenial to ask her to prolong her stay. She went away, and Cecil remained on, more to give his company than his assistance, for Warren's old servant rendered all other aid superfluous. At last Cecil went, the long-talked-of tour took place, and Warren seemed to gain strength all the faster for being left alone. He rather enjoyed the solitude which permitted him to think freely. A great revolution was going on in his mind, not only the hinges on which it turned, but the very foundations of principles he before considered solid were changed or changing. One morning, on returning from a short crawl round and about his hotel, where the unemployed guides looked wistfully at every able tourist, and pityingly on him, he found a letter with a black border lying on his table; it was from Mr. Graves, announcing the death of Mr. Moreton. "And I am spared—rescued from the very jaws of death," he said to himself. "Well, he was more ready than I. If I can only walk a little in his steps!"

That last thought reminded him that it was now his place to fill the vacant living as soon as his health allowed, meanwhile he must request the churchwardens to provide a substitute. A letter to that effect was soon dispatched, as well as another to the widow, with such words of condolence as a bereavement so sad permitted, adding also a hope, kindly expressed, that Mrs. Moreton would remain at the Rectory as long as was convenient to her.

When Mr. Sinclair was well enough to leave Chamounix for a warmer situation, the general disturbance of books and papers attendant upon packing brought to light a letter which had arrived at the time he was insensible, and had been put out of the way and forgotten. It was the one written by Mr. Moreton. Impressed now with a seal so solemn, Mr. Sinclair read it with an interest independent of its contents. It was doubly sacred, a bond between two worlds, being the message of a dying man to one only just returning from the confines of another life. "I hope he knew how ill I was," he thought, examining the date with much concern.

"He could not suppose I should have neglected to answer such a letter as this;" and then, after pondering over the almost paternal advice, and secretly praying that he might follow it in meekness and wisdom, he registered in his own heart a promise that he would befriend the widow and her children whenever it lay in his power, for the husband and father's sake.

Occasionally he heard from Mrs. Lestocq. It was about the middle of autumn when she was joined by her daughter, and Mr. Sinclair was then on his way to England, to take possession of the hated living of Hillesden, which, to Helen's perverse views, signified indifference to her wishes and a disregard of her happiness. This deep-rooted idea may account for her suffering her mother's pen to be the sole medium by which her regret for his accident, and her congratulations on his recovery, were conveyed. To do Mrs. Lestocq justice, they were as deep and warm as language, not too exaggerated to be true, could make them.

WHEN the head is removed, the members suffer. Nowhere is this truism more keenly felt than in the family of a clergyman, which is too often precipitated at his decease from comfort to poverty. This was now the position of the Moretons. They had some acquaintances in the neighbourhood, but few, if any, friends—a retired life having been the natural consequence of Mr. Moreton's indifferent health. And these, having done their social duty by calls and letters of condolence, fell back and left the afflicted mourners to struggle with their misery as best they could. Edward came home, there being now no chance of his completing his University education. Mrs. Moreton bewailed the fact in a limp, unreasoning manner, and thought that the ways of Providence were very hard. He grieved himself, and so did Mona; yet sometimes, in the cool twilight, after an anxious day, brother and sister sat together weaving the web of the future, where hope as a golden thread ran through the warp. Assisted by Mr. Graves, Edward did his best to look into their affairs and settle them for his mother's comfort. There was not much for them, but they thought they could manage to eke out a small income, and supplement it among themselves. Mr. Graves procured Mona lessons twice a week in two of the principal farmers' families in the parish, and, by his interest, obtained for Edward a situation as usher in the grammar-school of the neighbouring town of Corneford. He was more really anxious to befriend the Moretons than any one else, but not being a gentleman by birth, he was deficient in many of the finer sympathies, and often wounded where he meant to serve. Edward's wish to look out for something better after Christmas did not please him; he thought the young man ought to stay somewhere near home and take care of his mother, nor did he approve of his desire to return some day to college, and would have been more satisfied to see him take up with an honest trade rather than hanker after a tutorship, which he considered an unproductive employment, or "barren stock," as he characteristically expressed himself. However, to do him justice, he was a serviceable friend, though sometimes too ostentatious in his patronage.

In the first days of her bereavement Mrs. Moreton was inconsolable. She would bear no word of condolence nor of reason, and continually irritated Mona's grief by reproaches because, through her silence on that eventful day when sent for to see her dying father, she had been deprived of the one consolation she chiefly desired, that of seeing her husband once more. And Mona's best defence, "I did it in obedience to his wishes; he always charged me to spare you; nor did I then know how ill he was," never mitigated the bitterness of these upbraidings.

Again and again was the painful scene repeated until the young girl, in her great compassion for a sorrow she also shared, learned to accept the blame without remonstrance. Another trial for Mona rose out of the weakness of Mrs. Moreton's character, which threatened to destroy the peace of mind that might yet have sweetened her lot from duties conscientiously performed. At an early age she had taken the burdens of others upon herself; they seemed her natural portion, and brought their reward in the trust and happiness she inspired. Something was now changed. Although in equal request, when



anything was to be done she could not please her mother, they differed on so many points—unhappily on those where Mona thought she was most faithfully following her father's wishes. Often had she to seek her room, fretted and distressed, there to weigh the delicate point so puzzling to the young—the difficulty of ascertaining, when duties clash or are confused, where one ends and the other begins. The struggle told upon her all the more that it was secret; she grew graver and more sad, another offence in Mrs. Moreton's eyes, who could not bear to see dull countenances about her. Poor Mona's came too often under that description, it being only when Edward's sanguine temperament predicted his future success and return to college that Mona's sweet face regained its smile and a little of its former serenity.

Mr. Moreton had been dead nearly five weeks when Mr. Graves heard from Mr. Sinclair that he was well enough to undertake duty, and should be in Hillesden the following week.

Mrs. Moreton was still at the Rectory, and distressed her children by protesting that she had no intention of leaving it before seeing Mr. Sinclair. He had requested her to consult her own convenience about moving, and it did not suit her to do so at present.

"I have something in view which concerns him as much as ourselves," she said; "it is necessary that I should discuss my plans with him."

Neither direct questioning nor hazarded conjectures would induce her to say a word calculated to throw any light upon her intentions, so that Mona was left in a nervous uncertainty with more fear to harass than trust to reassure her. That Mrs. Moreton did not wish to leave the village where she had lived so long, and where her husband's memory enlisted so much sympathy in her behalf, was not surprising, but that she should persist in remaining at the Rectory, now that Mr. Sinclair was coming to take possession of the living, seemed to Mona a want of delicacy and propriety. Supported by Edward, she entreated and argued, but all in vain. Nor were they more successful when demonstrating arithmetically the impossibility of their continuing to maintain so large a house with so slender a purse. She put them aside as foolish children who did not know how to make their own way in the world, and laughed softly to herself at her superior wisdom. But when they came to speak of a cottage which, advised by Mr. Graves, they had taken some pains to secure, her pretty face reddened with displeasure, while she declared that nothing should ever induce her to make her home in such a wretched place as that.

"It is only fit for poor people, and you are willing to let your mother live there. What unkind children!" she exclaimed, raising her handkerchief to her eyes.

"But mamma, dear, we are poor, and cannot afford a better house. The small sum we receive from the insurance office, added to what poor papa was able to leave, will only produce £70 a year," observed Mona, patiently going over the same ground for about the twentieth time. "We shall nowhere find so pleasant a little place for so low a rent, and Mr. Payne will make it nice and snug. Edward will help a little by-and-by when he receives his salary, and you know I have begun to give lessons which bring in fifteen shillings a week. If Nita could find something to do we could live comfortably, at least we should have the necessaries of life."

"How can you talk so foolishly," exclaimed Mrs.

Moreton, exasperated to hear her daughter make the best of what was left, when she could only bewail what was lost; "and to call that living comfortably, why it is barely vegetating!"

"My dear mother, what can we do better?" expostulated Mona.

"Leave that to me. You cannot be expected to see so far into the future as I do. I can tell you nothing of my plans until I have seen Mr. Sinclair," and Mrs. Moreton closed her lips tightly together as if afraid of her secret escaping.

As the removal from the Rectory must take place before long, Edward and Mona, advised by Mr. Graves, decided to leave the negotiation respecting the cottage where it was. Mr. Payne was to put it in order, and Mrs. Moreton would ultimately occupy it.

The day came when the new rector was expected at Hillesden. It was Saturday, the last day of September; he was to be inducted into the living and take the duty on the morrow. Letters had passed between him and the churchwardens, but no change had occurred in the Moreton family, except that Edward had left them for Corneford. Mrs. Moreton was still the mistress of the Rectory, and living, as Mona well knew, beyond her means. Her anxiety for his arrival would have been amusing had it not, to Mona's practical turn of mind, foreboded something disagreeable. As the hours passed without giving the looked-for token, Mrs. Moreton fretted and wondered every now and then, enjoining silence that she might hear the church bell announce his induction. When the evening came, and he gave no sign of his presence, she began to weary herself with efforts to account for his absence, and to supply his place. "Perhaps he is ill again. How will Mr. Graves find a substitute at an hour's notice? How thoughtless of Mr. Sinclair! Some people have no consideration for others."

"I think Mr. Sinclair is not one of those," remarked Mona. "You know he forbade any bell-ringing or token of rejoicing on his account. That, surely, was in consideration for you."

"True," replied Mrs. Moreton, a little mollified.

"He also requested to have rooms taken for him at the inn, when he might reasonably have expected to find a bed here. Is it not indecorous to let Mr. Sinclair go to the village inn, when he ought to be in his own house?" asked Mona, hoping to make her mother feel the impropriety of continuing at the Rectory.

"My dear, I have offered to receive him through Mr. Graves," said Mrs. Moreton, with unruffled complacency, "and he has not accepted my kindness."

In her own estimation she had done the right thing, and was astonished at her daughter having any doubts about it. "Did he not expressly state that he wished me to remain as long as I pleased, and not to put myself to inconvenience? It would be very inconvenient for me to move."

"But, mother dear, we have retained possession for some time," remonstrated Mona, who thought that such phrases ought to be taken with limitations. "It is now more than five weeks—" Her voice faltered. The great sorrow had in no wise healed, though she rarely indulged it before her mother, who, on such occasions, usually blamed her for thinking more of herself than of her, and did so now.

"Don't bring back my grief so unnecessarily,"

she interrupted, putting her handkerchief to her eyes, and recommencing her bitter lamentations over her widowhood.

Having been happy so many years, the contrast between past and present was often too hard for her. She declared herself to be more ill-used than other widows, eulogising her husband as she had never done in his lifetime, and reproached her daughter for not entering more into her feelings.

"What can I do for you, mother, dear?" said Mona, patiently bearing the unmerited reproof, and endeavouring to kiss away her mother's tears, feeling all the time a chilling despair creep over her at the recollection that this wayward parent was a special charge from her father. That little question was a harrowing one.

Mrs. Moreton was one of those who have no scruples in shaping events to suit their own interests, taking it for granted, when she did think of others, that what suited her must infallibly suit them. As far as was in her power she would make life easy for herself, and naively wondered if any one saw in that a ground for disapprobation. She was determined not to leave the Rectory at present. The way by which she contemplated securing her object would have been original had it not been so completely in accordance with her character as to be only one trait out of many. Mr. Sinclair's position afforded her the opportunity of gratifying her wishes. Bachelor and partial invalid as he was, she concluded that it might add considerably to his comfort to be taken care of in a motherly way, as well as to be freed from the petty annoyances of housekeeping, generally very distasteful to a man. He would be glad, she argued, to have some one responsible for his welfare. This office she was willing to undertake, and had already made up her mind how to dispose of her daughters. Mona should be a governess and go out into the world, but Nita might remain at the Rectory, her youth and Mr. Sinclair's engagement removing, in her opinion, every shade of impropriety from the arrangement. With a disposition to seize quickly every point in her own favour, she would easily have adapted her plans to other circumstances had Mr. Sinclair been without any previous attachment. As it was, she was satisfied with the proposition contemplated. It was pleasant and feasible, comprising also so many mutual advantages that she never doubted its acceptance, and awaited his arrival with considerable eagerness.

"Mr. Sinclair will not come to-night; it is getting late. There will be no service to-morrow. What would your dear father say if he knew it?" remarked Mrs. Moreton, drying her tears, as she fixed her eyes on the clock now marking nine.

Passing from her personal grief to the deprivation likely to be in store for the parish, she found plenty to talk about till bedtime. Since Mr. Moreton's death Nita had shared her mother's room and was her principal companion. Mona had one to herself, and was often glad to be alone. Added to the void in her heart was a growing fear that daily assumed greater strength. Her affection for her father entailed a duty more and more difficult to perform. He had laid upon her an obligation she could not avoid, and yet, was not the fulfilment of it likely to estrange her mother? To caress and tend with patient love was not all; she knew she was expected to shield, to protect, and, if not to direct, at least to persuade when hard questions arose in their daily life. She

was to stand between that mother and everything that might hurt or vex her, and how could this be done without wounding susceptibilities generally morbid and a judgment often weak? To sacrifice her own comfort day after day would be easy, were it only that; but Mrs. Moreton would have no opposition made to any idea emanating from herself. The determination to refuse the cottage was now troubling her. If they suffered that chance to be lost, where were they to find another abode so comfortable on the whole and so suited to their little income? It was impossible to continue in Mr. Sinclair's house now that he was ready to take it. Why did not her mother see the absolute unfitness of such a prospect? The trial that had rent their hearts must necessarily change their home, the one fact was as irremediable as the other. Why could not her mother see things as they were, instead of wilfully shutting her eyes and acting as if their circumstances were unaltered? What would be thought of them? Mona threw up the window for the fresh air to cool her fevered cheek which grew hot and red, though no eye saw her embarrassment. The fragrant flowers and dewy scent of the evening did nothing to allay her pain. She too would be sorry to leave the home endeared by such tender recollections, but painful as that must be, it would be as nothing compared to the mortification of knowing that the whole parish wondered at their remaining on now that the rector was coming. Besides, what could be done? They could not stay there for ever, and what would Mr. Sinclair think of this continued encroachment upon his kindness? And if the cottage should be taken by some one else, what are we to do? Musing over the vexations attending such a contingency, she stood abstractedly gazing into the star-lit heavens, communing with herself, hoping one minute that she was wrong and took too serious a view of things, and the next earnestly wishing that Mr. Sinclair's return might be delayed, so that there would be more chance of inducing Mrs. Moreton to change her residence. "But what can I do?" sighed Mona, feeling herself both responsible and helpless and very sad. The sorrow connected with her bereavement was soft and gentle, mellowing the heart, but these perpetual annoyances seemed to crush and wither it. Any hope she had of gaining time by Mr. Sinclair's deferred arrival was soon extinguished. Clear and loud through the stillness of the evening the church-bell suddenly clanged and boomed, the echoes floating sweetly in the air to tell the news. The lateness of the hour permitted only one explanation. It must be Mr. Sinclair giving the accustomed sign of induction, that by which he took possession of the temporalities of Hillesden. He would be at his post to-morrow, and her father's place would be vacant only in their sorrowful household.

## LEGAL ANECDOTES.

RECOLLECTIONS OF BARON PARKE.

THE late Baron Parke (afterwards Lord Wensleydale) was, and still is, regarded as one of the most learned and distinguished lawyers who ever filled the position of a judge. His great power of legal argument was, it is true, at times marred by his fondness for minute technical distinctions, but his astonishing industry, and regard for the exact

truth, in all that came before him, extorted the praise of every lawyer, although perhaps not quite so much appreciated by the outer world.

Baron Parke was what is termed a "Black Letter" lawyer, and very seldom, in writing the judgment of his court (a duty continually imposed upon him), would rely on the correctness of any modern report. He would search for the principle involved in the case in older authorities, until, perhaps, reaching the trials in the "Year Books," some three centuries old, written in black letter and Norman French, they would fail to satisfy him, and officials would be employed to hunt up the original "Rolls" of the court, at the Tower and elsewhere, from which he would find that an error had crept into the ancient reports and run through all succeeding ones, only to be corrected after many ages by his own luminous judgment.

The reader may form an idea of the Baron's intense regard for legal *minutiae*, sometimes irreverently called "hair splitting," from the following two anecdotes. An attorney made an application before the Baron, when sitting one day at chambers, under the provisions of the Common Law Procedure Act, for a landlord to recover possession of certain premises which had been vacated by the tenant. It was necessary that the affidavit used should, amongst other things, state that half a year's rent of the premises was owing. Glancing his eye over the document, the judge indignantly threw it back, exclaiming, "How dare you ask me to give an order, sir, on imperfect materials?" "My lord, I thought the affidavit was in due form." "It is not, sir; where is the averment that half a year's rent is owing?" "Here, my lord, 'and this deponent maketh oath and saith that there is now owing to him £75, being three-quarters of a year's rent,' etc." "And do you suppose, sir," said the Baron, with great severity, "do you, as an attorney of this court, suppose that I sit here as a mathematician, to assume that half a year's rent is included in three-quarters? there can be no such legal deduction, and the affidavit must be amended."

Our other instance is still more amusing. The late Justice Hayes, pleading when Serjeant Hayes, at Warwick, told the jury that the speech of his "learned friend" on the opposite side had nothing whatever to do with the case before them, and reminded him of a little anecdote. A tourist stayed one night at a humble inn, and walking out early the next morning, asked a countryman he met the name of the town. "Stony Stratford," replied the labourer. "Ah!" replied his interrogator, "you may well call it 'Stony Stratford,' for I was never so much troubled with fleas as I was last night in my life." "Brother Hayes," interrupted Baron Parke, who sat as judge, "pray be correct, sir; it was *bugs*, 'I never was so much troubled with bugs in my life.'" "I think, my lord, it was fleas," said Hayes, in his most winning manner. "No, brother, it was bugs; I'm *certain* it was bugs; pray be correct, it's the very essence of all law and justice." "Well, gentlemen," said Hayes, with a twinkle in his eyes, "the case is not reported; I bow to my lord, his correctness is unimpeachable; the answer was, 'I was never more troubled with fleas or bugs'—I beg his lordship's pardon—'bugs or fleas, than I was last night,' and the bugs or fleas had as little to do with the name 'Stony Stratford' as my learned friend's speech had to do with his case."

A remarkable criminal case was once tried before Baron Parke, in which his ruling and sentence were at the time considered extremely hard and severe; upon re-argument before the fifteen judges in London his law was held to be sound, and has remained as a text in succeeding cases.

The prisoner purchased at an auction an old bureau, and finding it rather too long for a recess in which he wished to fit it, got a carpenter to cut off a portion of the moulding at one end. While this was doing, a secret drawer flew open and disclosed one hundred guineas, which had been hidden there; the carpenter claimed half, as the finder of the coin; this was refused, and a single guinea given him, the purchaser taking the rest of the money and appropriating it to his own use. The carpenter blazed abroad the story, the heir-at-law of the deceased owner of the bureau claimed the money, and being refused, gave the purchaser into custody for stealing his property. The case was tried at the Liverpool Assizes before Baron Parke, who told the jury that the prisoner only bought the bureau, and that that only was intended to be sold, that the money was still *legally* in the custody of the man who placed it there, or of his heirs-at-law, and that if they believed the fact that the prisoner took the money from the bureau, and spent it, that was larceny in the eye of the law. The jury had no alternative but to find a verdict of guilty, and the judge sentenced the prisoner to three months' imprisonment with hard labour.

With all his peculiarities, however, Baron Parke was a most wonderful judge. He sat on the bench for twenty-eight years, and during the whole of that long period never left a single cause a *remanet* from one Assize to another. His method of trying *all* the business on circuit was a very simple one; he adapted the time he sat in court to the length of the cause-list before him, hence there was no sitting of "ten to four" or "ten to five," as at the present day, but when once seated it was utterly impossible for the most ingenious mind to prophesy when he would rise. At the trial of Tawell for murder at Aylesbury in March, 1845, the court sat at eight a.m., and did not rise till four a.m. the next morning.

On the South Wales Spring Circuit, 1850, at Brecon, the energies of the Baron were still more severely taxed. The cause-list was unexpectedly heavy, and the time limited for the trials altogether insufficient for any judge but himself. The cases were, however, all duly tried, for the court sat thus: Monday, 9 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Tuesday, 8.30 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Wednesday, 8 a.m. to 1 a.m. *the next morning*, when the judge retired to rest, starting in a carriage and four on a forty-five miles' posting journey to Presteign, the next Assize town, at 6.30 the same morning! At this time the learned judge was over seventy years of age. "I never," said an old servant of his to the writer—"I never go into the Baron's bedroom, however early in the morning, but he is reading in bed; and I never leave him, however late at night, but he is reading in his chair!"

As with many other great judges, law was all in all to Baron Parke. "I wonder," said a lady to him shortly before his death, "that with your great mind, Baron, you have never written anything." "Written anything!" was the astonished answer, "why, my dear madam, I have written the judgments in the volumes of 'Measom and Welsby,' and they will remain long after the perishable literature of the present time has passed away."



## IN PURSUIT OF THE SIKHS AND AFGHANS.

II.

IT must have been a saddening sight, though a relief, on that 12th of March, 1849, to see these old soldiers crowding across the shallow waters of the Schwan, stripping off their accoutrements, and laying down the trusted tulwars and muskets with which they had fought so bravely on the Sutlege, Jhelum, and Chenab rivers. It was a great prize, no doubt, which they saw before them; had they conquered the British, not only would they have remained masters of the Punjab, but all India would have been at their feet. One fine old white-bearded Sikh as he laid down his sword salaamed profoundly to it and said, "*Aj Runjeet Sing ke Raj zuror murgya*" ("To-day Runjeet Sing's royal reign has surely died out"). A few miles farther on we came to a park of Sikh artillery, left standing in a field on the roadside, with only a few men looking after them. This absence of almost any military precaution as to the safety of these guns, the greatest trophies of modern battles, told more forcibly than anything else the belief of our general in the total collapse of all Sikh military opposition. Rawul Pindie was our next halting-place, but we little knew what a favourite station it was so soon to become. On leaving it we came in the early morning to an open country, at one end of which was a plain covered with a purple flower. Our medical chief, an enthusiastic Scotchman, wondered with the rest of us what it could be. Somebody suggested it was heather in bloom, a reasonable-like thought, as we were in such a cold climate. The bare hint was enough to set us off; our horses were immediately put into their best racing pace, and in five minutes we were in the midst of it, and *undecided*. Everybody then said they were sure before we started that it was not, it could not be, heather; but the disappointed look on some of the Scotch faces made it difficult to believe that the dear old heather-bell was not present in their thoughts a few minutes before. On we marched, halting at Hussien Abdal, and tried to remember Moore's "Lallah Rookh" as we visited the tomb and the sacred tank with the tame fish in it. Next day, wading the Hurro river, we entered on the great plain which leads up to the Abba Sein (Father of Rivers), the grand old Indus, the great north-western boundary of India. There we met a cavalry officer from the general, with orders.

The Afghan cavalry, who had so shamelessly been the first to bolt from the field of battle at Goojerat, and dishearten their unnatural allies the Sikhs, had made a stand at the bridge at Attock. They meant us to understand that they intended to resume possession of Peshawur, the ancient capital of Afghanistan wrested from them by Runjeet Sing. Gilbert when at Hussien Abdal heard that they meant to burn the bridge of boats over the Indus at Attock.

Fearing they would carry out their threat and thus hinder his crossing, he took the cavalry and a troop of horse-artillery and galloped on to Attock. Better mounted than the men, he and a few staff officers rode on a-head; and, to the astonishment of the Afghan horse, appeared on the Indian side of the

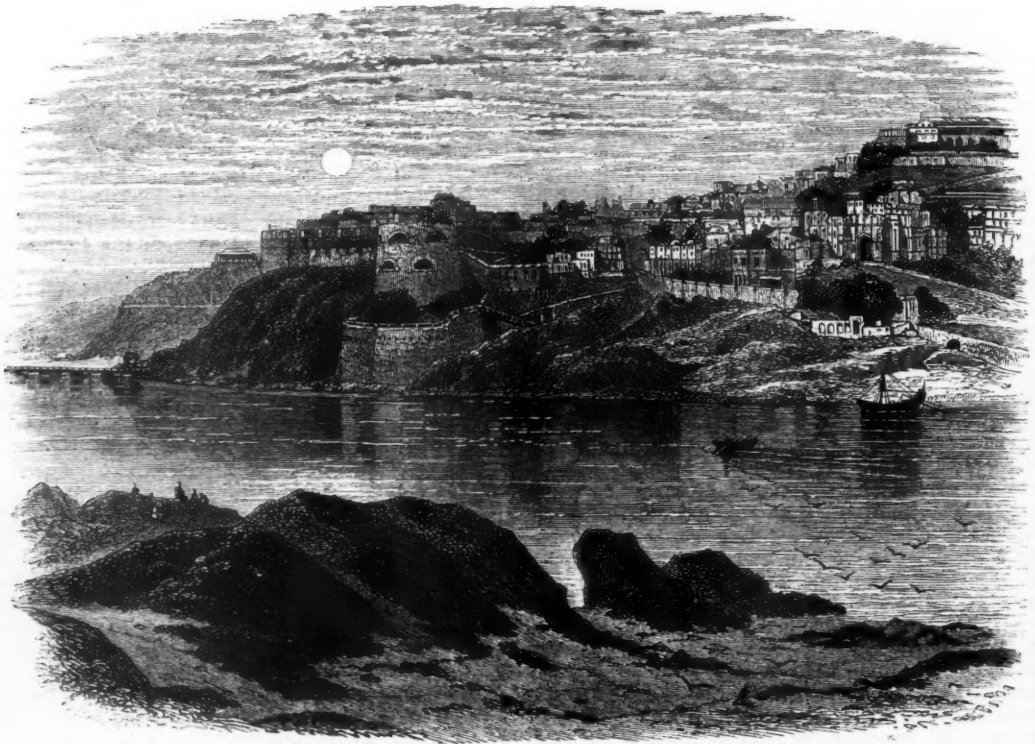
bridge. They did not expect him there for a few days, but they had begun their work, and had four boats on fire. A sight of Gilbert scared the fellows who were at work, and off they went. The Afghans assembled on the opposite shore, to look as if they meant to dispute the passage. Gilbert sent to hasten the guns up. They quickly came, unlimbered, got into action immediately, and quickly persuaded the Afghan horse to leave off their vain hope of stopping him. It was a great geographical and historical joy, so to speak, looking on the great Indus, where we arrived a day or two after. We could see the gorge some miles off on our right, through which it issues, a great river from its mountain home. The mystery of its source, its course which no map can yet truly tell, and the fabled stories of wonder that attach to it, its golden sands and ice-cold water, and though last not least the sight of the hills of Afghanistan on its frontier shore, filled us with the joy of travellers. We seemed to forget our military situation in the presence of this grand scene. From the rocks about Attock you see the river flowing slowly along in several broad channels enjoying itself in the freedom of the plain, on which it has entered for the first time. There it is fordable for elephants in the cold season when it is low, and there Runjeet Sing crossed his army when he first entered the Peshawur valley.

Below where we stood the river again narrowed into a channel some 200 yards wide and very deep. At times the stream rushes past in eddying currents, sometimes rising into wavelets which make the crossing dangerous. When the summer heats melt the Himalayan snows the river rises here fifty feet above its cold weather level, and then no bridge of boats can stand its tremendous force. No native ventures to cross the terrible flood, even in the cold weather when it is small, unless aided by a "mussack," or inflated goat's skin. Tradition had it, however, that an old woman, buoyed up by her clothes, got safely over. A young Scotchman hearing of its being considered a dangerous unattempted thing, determined to try it. He took the precaution of having a man on a "mussack" near him, and started to swim across. The eddies would, the natives said, suck him under, but he passed them all and was fully two-thirds across when a sudden fear seized him. He called to the "mussack" man for help, as he found himself, he said, in hot water. The man answered him quickly, "No fear, sahib, it's only the Cabul water you have got into." The fact is the Cabul river enters the Indus about half a mile above Attock, and not being fed by melting snows all the year round, its waters are comparatively warm, and the two rivers run parallel for some distance in the same channel before uniting.

Next day we crossed the river, but had to go warily, as the Sikh bridge was far from strong. No elephants are allowed to cross these bridges of boats. They, however, swim with great ease, and it is amusing to watch them. They are so accustomed to be able to wade most rivers that they usually feel for the bottom. The effect of this on the *mahout* (driver),

who is secured by a rope to his elephant, is distressing. I saw an elephant swimming along beautifully, his head and trunk well out of the water, and his driver sitting on his neck, when suddenly the beast began to sink down. The mahout objected in very forcible terms, using his iron driving-rod liberally, and shouting abuse at the top of his voice. Down as the elephant went, the man had to get on his feet and stand on the beast's head. Farther down he (the elephant) went, till the top of his trunk—his breathing nostril only—was out of the water. The man climbed up by it, but could with difficulty keep his head above the water. The suspense was of short

and made the road to Peshawur unsafe for small parties of travellers along the first thirty or forty miles from Attock. At the other end of the Geedur Gully hills runs the Cabul river, across which highwaymen from the Eusufzai country used to come and take their share in plundering the weak or unprotected merchant or traveller. On emerging from the pass, the grand valley of Peshawur begins to open out, and though bare and uncultivated at first, it soon becomes more interesting. Villages are seen with cultivation about them, resting on the Cabul river, which runs through the centre of the valley from west to east. It is more like a home river than



ATTOCK.

duration. The elephant, finding no rest for the sole of his foot, came to the surface. The man resumed his seat, and was borne safely to the bank.

On we marched into the Peshawur valley, through the Geedur Gully Pass—jackal's lane or throat—a winding, narrow road, some miles long through dwarfed hills. They were big enough, however, to hide any number of highwaymen, and had the reputation of being the scene of many a robbery and murder during the Sikh occupation of Peshawur and before. A disagreeable feature met frequently along it was little piles of stones by the roadside. These marked the spots where murdered bodies had been found. What rendered the place so convenient for dark deeds was that these low hills formed the end of a spur of higher hills that come down from the Khuttack hills, which form the southern boundary of the Peshawur valley. These Khuttack gentlemen were practised hands at highway robbery,

any met with in the plains of India, and had a cheery, active look. Instead of flowing smoothly and mightily along a huge bed of sand, it rattles over stony rapids occasionally, and does not seem lazy and oppressed with heat as Indian rivers appear to be.

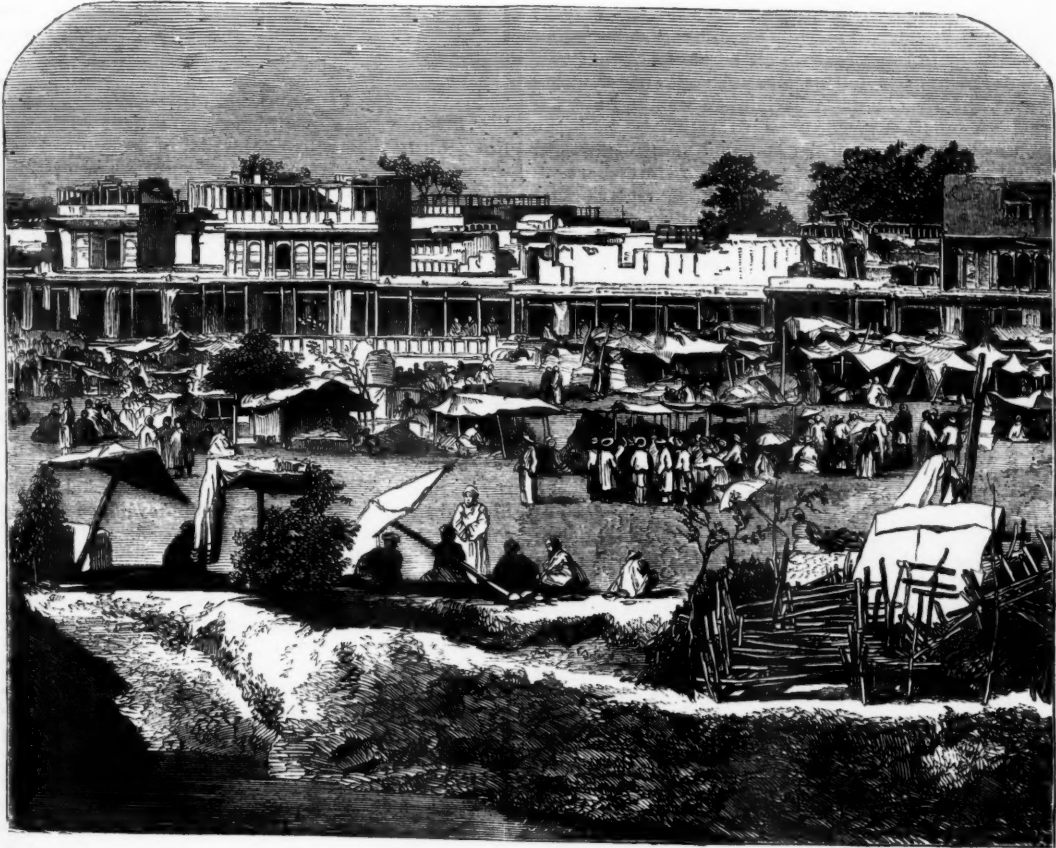
The brigade in front of us had pushed on to Peshawur, and we now heard that the Afghans had retreated rapidly on that city, and had staid just long enough to take time to burn the military cantonment of the Sikhs. It had been built near to the west side of the city, between it and the Khyber. The Afghans by this act declared their belief in the complete overthrow of the power of these their old enemies and late friends. On entering their old hills they thus left behind them, in tongues of fire, their last message to Hindoo and Feringhee Kafirs (unbelievers), that they wished to have no further friendly intercourse with either one or other of them. Safe within their hills, they thought they might defy



them all, and be safe from all friendly or hostile communications with races from whom they had received nothing very pleasant and much that was wrong.

We continued our march to Peshawur, and entered the city with all the curiosity of the traveller, for its people and characteristics are widely different from those of the cities of India. Here we met the Central India men, and could fancy ourselves back in Cairo rather than in the far East. The large-turbaned head, handsome face and fair complexion of the men, which sometimes a ruddy tinge lightened up, told of a

quantities to travellers and people generally, and the number of butchers' shops in the best parts of the town, told us we were no longer in the country where the cow is looked on as sacred, and where a strange superstition withholds from killing any animal (save man). The houses, too, are constructed differently, and all the brick walls are built with wooden supports, which must enhance their expense and limit their endurance. There is, however, a needs be in this, for the city is so frequently visited by earthquakes that it would be yearly in ruins but for this



THE MARKET-PLACE AT PESHAWUR.

less tropical and more invigorating climate than we had farther south. The resolute appearance of the fine men, with their big turbans and warm clothing, told us we were mingling with a people who needed to protect their brains, like ourselves, from summer heat, and who required warm clothing to shelter them from winter cold. There was a marked difference, too, in the style of address of the people, and a pleasure-giving frankness in their conversation. The laying out of the town in large squares, and the nature of the goods sold in the bazaars, was a nearer approach to Egyptian or European style and merchandise than what we were accustomed to. The prominence given to "Kobab" shops, where prepared meats are sold in

building arrangement. Much more that was interesting arrested our attention, and made us wish to get another chance of seeing the city again, but one thing truth compels me to confess, and that is, that a fine fresh piece of cheese lying on a clean board in a wholesome-looking milk-shop had particularly attracted our attention. Two of us marked the characteristics of the locality where the shop was, and on our arrival in camp outside the city, sent a servant with ready money to acquire the cheese. Our table at the time was not crowded with luxuries, and the commissariat bread, our main stay, was often very sour and always gritty. Our usual simple campaigning dinner was that day scantily partaken of, as the

new Peshawur course was coming. The beautifully white round cheese was put on the table, and liberal helps were given to each. Alas! our feast was all in anticipation, for the cheese was so cruelly "singed" that it sickened us to taste it. The disappointment ended in its removal from the table, and in the demanded return of the unfinished portions of dinner that had been sent away from the table.

Our hopes of frequently revisiting the interesting city were dashed by an order for the whole force to march still forward to Jumrood, the lately memorable advanced post from which General Sir Neville Chamberlain's embassy was turned back. Here we lay encamped, staring at the mouth of the Khyber Pass and Khyber hills for about ten days. Day by day fresh rumours kept the camp lively enough, for our friends in India sent up all sorts of contradictory rumours as to our destination. An advance to Cabul was in the air one day; Jellalabad was to be occupied on another; we were to retire beyond the Indus on another; and the last and most distasteful of all was the canard that we were to stop where we were at Jumrood, and build a cantonment in that treeless, grassless, desolate plain.

This state of uncertainty did not last very long, for up came an order from the Governor-General in Council (Dalhousie), annexing the Punjab, on the 30th of March, 1849. It was read out at a grand parade of the army, held that morning for the purpose of hearing it. Strong, decided, and terse was its language. Its stirring tones thrilled through the hearts of the soldiers, who were thus fully satisfied with the splendid result of all their endurance and efforts to serve their Queen and country. A royal salute, fired by the light artillery in camp, was answered by the big guns in the citadel of Peshawur, which told the Afghan hills that they were to be the boundary of the English Government of India. They told, too, in "accents rude," that a Christian Queen now ruled over the Punjab, and would allow no one to hinder the messengers of the Cross of Christ from carrying their glad news to this the farthest corner of her Majesty's Indian Empire. Immediately after this orders came for our camp to be retired to the site of the old Sikh cantonment near the city of Peshawur, and for a portion of the force to return to Lahore. There being no more fighting expected on a grand scale, the field hospital was ordered to return down country too, and its officers were distributed among the different regiments appointed to garrison the Punjab. Such were some of the pleasant closing scenes of the Punjab campaign. We could not but be glad at having no professional work, as that meant no fighting. We were free, therefore, to enjoy life in camp, which with fine weather, fine fellows, and a merciful ending, made up some of the happiest days of a lifetime.

### THE ORIGIN OF LIFE.

IN the records of the future historian the rapid development of the natural sciences must inevitably be chronicled as one especial characteristic of the latter half of the nineteenth century. But, in spite of this marvellous intellectual progress, some of the successive steps of which it has been our privi-

lege to witness, it must nevertheless be admitted that the old problem of the "origin of life," when considered from philosophic grounds alone, still remains an insolvable mystery. For materialists, whilst aptly demonstrating that the animal body is surely the product of molecular force, are yet compelled to avow their inability to reply to the questions:—Whence came primeval matter? What divided it into molecules, and caused them to assume organic forms? They are also at a loss to explain the phenomenon of the first appearance of life on our planet, unless, indeed, Sir William Thompson's suggestion, that the primordial germ was derived from the *débris* of another world, be regarded as serious—a supposition, however, which would merely remove the inquiry a step further back, whence it would naturally recommence *de novo*.

To speculative philosophers, therefore, the theory of the spontaneous generation of the lowest forms of life has always appealed with an almost irresistible force, for to them it is as the plot of ground, or fulcrum to Archimedes—the standpoint whence to start their world. First promulgated by Aristotle, and subsequently, after the lapse of many centuries, adopted almost literally by the French naturalist Lamarck, as the necessary basis of his views of the progressive development of life from the lower to the higher forms, this seductive hypothesis, agreeing equally with old cosmogonies and new theories, rests absolutely unsupported by facts. For the results of all those extended surveys of the ocean by the dredge and the sounding apparatus, which have revealed the wonders of a before unknown world, have failed to prove the spontaneous generation of life in the depths of the sea, while the most elaborate experiments in the laboratory have been alike fatal to the hypothesis that it has ever been developed without some pre-existent germ.

But, before glancing at the most recent attempts to bridge over the gulf between the living and the lifeless, it may be desirable to consider the attributes and constitution of life as represented in the lower forms.

For the convenience of classification, all natural objects are grouped either in the mineral, the vegetable, or the animal kingdoms, while all living organisms are placed in the vegetable or the animal worlds; but it is often no easy matter, and, indeed, in some cases, apparently impossible, to determine to which of the two great divisions some of the lower forms of life are to be referred. Some zoologists have therefore proposed the formation of an intermediate kingdom (the *regnum protisticum*) for the reception of organisms of such doubtful characters. Thus, recent researches have shown that plants cannot be separated from animals either on chemical or microscopical grounds. The existence of sensitive plants (the *Mimosæ*), which, while capable of feeling, are yet, like the jelly-fishes and some other animals, devoid of almost all traces of a nervous system, removes a distinction formerly considered as conclusive. Outward form, modes of growth and reproduction, no longer serve to guide, for many animals, as the zoophytes, are rooted like plants, while some plants are free. The zoophytes, moreover, are first reproduced by a process of budding, and the common fresh-water hydra can be multiplied by cuttings from the parent form, and is therefore propagated like slips. Vegetables were formerly believed to be nourished solely by inorganic substances; but

as many plants are now known to absorb animal matter, and, like the insect-capturing "Venus's fly-trap," are carnivorous in their habits, the nature of their food no longer serves as a distinction.

In the most lowly organised group of the animal kingdom are comprised numberless minute animals, many of which are invisible to the naked eye. These *protozoans*, or "first animals," are composed of an almost structureless jelly-like substance called "sarcode," or "protoplasm," resembling the white of an egg, and consisting mainly of albumen, or an allied substance. This "sarcode" is contractile, moving at the will of the animal, and in many instances this contractibility is the sole evidence of life. For some protozoans are simply masses of living jelly, and are destitute of a permanent mouth, of digestive organs, and of all traces of a nervous system. Other forms secrete delicately-constructed chambered shells, which were at one time erroneously classed with the nautiloid mollusca, but are now proved to have been inhabited by animals consisting of masses of nearly formless protoplasm, resembling in all essential characters those which are devoid of a shelly envelope, a striking instance of the instability of systems of classification based on external characters alone. Many of the shells are perforated by apertures, or *foramina*, whence the class name of *Foraminifera* is derived, and through these minute openings the sarcode is protruded in filamentary root-like processes, and the necessary nourishment obtained.\*

The Foraminifera can apparently sustain life under variable conditions of temperature and depth; they occur in shallow water, and have also been dredged from a depth of three miles. Floating in innumerable quantities in the existing oceans, and occurring over wide areas, their shells at death accumulate at the bottom, which serves as the burial-ground of countless bygone generations, and form the extensive deposits known as the "globigerina-ooze." The life history of this curious group of organisms is most interesting, for the type is a very ancient one, and if the famous Eozoöcal limestone of the Laurentian period be regarded as of organic origin, the Foraminifera were among the first representatives of life in the primordial oceans. They range through all the geological series, formed masses of limestone of Silurian, Carboniferous, and Jurassic age, were the main agents in the deposition of the chalk, and occur in the Tertiary limestones of the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Carpathians, and the Himalayas, where their presence indicates the comparatively recent date at which those mountain chains were upheaved.

With the Protozoans are also classed the Sponges, and the Infusoria, including those minute organisms which appear in vegetable and animal infusions, where their development still forms the subject of debate. Some authors, as Bastian, Pouchet, and Le Pasteur, maintain that they are spontaneously developed; others, like Drysdale, Tyndall, etc., that they are in all cases derived from pre-existent germs, which either remain undestroyed by the excessive temperature to which the infusions are subjected, or obtaining access to them from the atmosphere under favourable conditions, speedily attain maturity and multiply in kind. But the results of Professor

Tyndall's recent elaborate experiments in the rarefied atmosphere of the higher Alpine altitudes, prove conclusively that all sterile infusions remain absolutely devoid of every trace of life when exposed in a perfectly pure air, and that they become fertilised only in an atmosphere already impregnated with the invisible germs.

While, therefore, it is evident that many of the lower plants cannot be distinguished from the lower animals, and that life in its earliest development in the lowest organised animals is of a very simple type, the connection, which according to some authorities links the *mineral* to the animal world, is not supported by facts. Many attempts have been made to bridge over the gulf between the organic and the inorganic, but hitherto without success, as the history of the Bathybius testifies.

Now the history of the Bathybius is merely the chronicle of an error; but as in this case many important deductions were based on the existence of an organism which was subsequently proved never to have existed at all, a brief recapitulation of the chief points in its history may not be uninteresting, more especially as they have an important bearing on some of the most debated scientific questions of the day.

The name of Bathybius was originally employed by Professor Huxley to describe "certain masses of protoplasmic matter" constituting a new phase of living beings "which had been dredged from a depth of 650 fathoms in the North Atlantic Ocean." The announcement of the discovery of this lowly organised type of organisms was made at the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in 1868, and papers on the subject appeared in the "Quarterly Journal of Microscopical Science" and in the Proceedings of the Royal Society in the same year. At a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society of London in 1870, Professor Huxley, in the course of the discussion on a paper by Captain Sherard Osborn, R.N., "On the Bed of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans," again referred to Bathybius in the following words. "The Bathybius formed a living scum or film on the sea-bed extending over thousands upon thousands of square miles; evidence of its existence had been found throughout the whole North and South Atlantic, and wherever the Indian Ocean had been surveyed, so that probably it forms one continuous scum of *living matter* girding the whole surface of the earth." Alluding to the biological difficulty of the existence of life in the dark abysses of the ocean, he continued—"There was a large group of organisms belonging to the group of fungi which did not need light at all. He saw nothing to prevent organisms of a low character from developing themselves in any quantity at the bottom of the sea."

Professor Huxley's description of this deep-sea "urschleim," or primitive slime, was based on a small quantity of mud which had been preserved in spirits for nearly eleven years, but his observations were speedily confirmed by Professor Hæckel, of Jena, who published descriptions of specimens he had also obtained. Professor Wyville Thompson, moreover, referring to a subsequent dredging of a large quantity of mud off the Faroe Isles during the governmental dredging expedition in H.M.S. Lightning, stated that "the mud was actually alive; it stuck together in lumps, as if there were white of egg mixed with it, and the gairy mass proved under the microscope to be *living sarcode*." He considered this

\* Foraminifera with cilia protruded are figured in Sir Wyville Thompson's "Voyage of the Challenger," vol. I., p. 214.



widely distributed "gelatinous matter to be capable of a certain amount of movement, and there could be no doubt that it manifested the phenomena of a very simple form of life." His colleague, Dr. W. B. Carpenter, believed "that the whole mass of this mud was penetrated by a living organism of a type even lower, because less definite, than that of the Sponges, or Rhizopods" (*Foraminifera*), and added, what has since proved to be a rather unfortunate remark, "The discovery of this indefinite plasmodium, covering a wide area of the existing sea-bottom, should afford remarkable confirmation—to such, at least, as still think confirmation necessary—of the organic origin of the serpentine limestone of the Laurentian formation. For if Bathybius, like the testaceous Rhizopods, could form for itself a shelly envelope, that envelope would closely resemble Eozoön. Further, as Professor Huxley has proved the existence of Bathybius through a great range, not merely of depth, but of temperature, I cannot but think it probable that it has existed continuously in the deep seas of all geological epochs."

The conclusions so positively announced of the existence of this new form of life were hastily accepted by the majority of leading biologists. Dr. G. C. Wallich, of the Indian Army, however, whose varied contributions to our knowledge of the life history of the organisms of the deep sea seem to have been scarcely sufficiently recognised, always denied, on physiological grounds, the justice of the theories of its organic nature, and, in 1869, courageously maintained that the "so-called Bathybius" was *the effete product instead of the source* of any of the vital forces which are already in operation in the sea-bed, . . . and that its alleged existence was wholly illusory—a view which subsequently proved to be correct.

For, after ten years of almost uncontroverted acceptance, this "shapeless coat of living slime" was found during the cruise of the Challenger to have no existence whatever. Material from the sea-bed was subjected to a rigid examination, but no trace of the Bathybius was discoverable. In 1875 Professor Wyville Thompson wrote to Professor Huxley informing him of the fact, and in a letter published in "Nature" (August, 1875), the inorganic nature was at once admitted by its original discoverer. Thus the jelly-like organism believed to be an all-pervading organic covering of the sea-bottom was found to be without motion, and therefore devoid of the attributes of life, and the deceptive appearances of vitality proved, on chemical analysis, to have been caused by the strong alcohol in which the earliest specimens had been so long preserved. For when spirit of wine was added to the fresh specimens of mud brought up from the bottom, they assumed a very mobile and jelly-like aspect, and a "coagulated mucus" was produced exactly resembling the descriptions of the Bathybius, which it was perfectly evident was destitute of motion, and consisted merely of sulphate of lime precipitated in a flocculent state by the action of the alcohol on the sea-water pervading the mud.

In thus recalling attention to this failure to substantiate the truth of an alleged discovery, we are far from desirous of insisting upon the fact that several eminent scientists were mistaken in their assumptions, for truly *humanum est errare*. But at the same time it is obvious that the history of the Bathybius appears to warrant the conclusion that advanced

biologists were somewhat too eager in their welcome of this "independent and widely-distributed plasmodium," omitting to subject its claims to be ranked as a living organism to that rigorous investigation, the sole basis of all permanent scientific progress.

It is further fairly questionable, if the difficulty of distinguishing the living from the lifeless in the existing period be sufficient to baffle scientists of acknowledged standing, whether similar definitions are to be regarded as absolutely conclusive when applied to fossil specimens derived from the most ancient rocks. The history of the Bathybius has, therefore, a special bearing on that of the Eozoön, that primal organism of the Laurentian period, the subject of so prolonged a controversy. First described as a mineral structure, its organic nature was subsequently maintained by Dr. Dawson, Dr. Carpenter, Professor Rupert Jones, and others, who regard it as a Foraminifera of the highest type. These views were, however, ably contested by Professors King and Rowney, who consider it to be merely produced by chemical agency, an opinion afterwards shared by Professor Schultze, and the debate has very recently received a further stimulus from the conversion of Professor Karl Mobius, who, originally a believer in its organic nature, feels compelled, after renewed investigations, to affirm that it is inorganic, and belongs to the mineral and not to the animal world.

With the disappearance of the Bathybius from the list of living beings, the hope that mineral matter may become like that we call organic, and finally organised and of definite form, once more vanishes. While the statements so constantly enunciated by Professor Hæckel, that "the primitive life organisms were formed chemically by spontaneous generation at the bottom of the sea, like saline crystals in water," may be viewed as merely dogmatic assertions, without logical basis and incapable of proof.

Dr. Virchow, in his remarkable discourse on "The Freedom of Science in the Modern State,"\* thus dismisses the theory of the spontaneous generation of life. "The doctrine has now again been taken up in connection with Darwinism, and I cannot deny that there is a sort of strong temptation to adopt the ultimate conclusion of the evolution theory, and after setting forth the whole series of living forms from the lowest *protista* to the highest human organism, to proceed to link on this long series to the inorganic world. . . . Whoever recalls to mind the lamentable failure of all the attempts made very recently to discover a decided support for the *generatio æquivoca* in the lower forms of transition from the inorganic to the organic world, will feel it doubly serious to demand that this theory, so utterly discredited, should be in any way accepted as the basis of all our views of life."—"Times," Jan. 29, 1879.)

Thus it seems evident that the creed of the materialist rests on unstable foundations, for the dictum that "life originates from matter" is no nearer proof to-day than when in long-past ages it first perplexed the minds of men. There is obviously, therefore, speaking on scientific grounds alone, no rational necessity for embracing the gloomy and egotistical tenets of materialism, the disastrous effects of which we can already perceive overshadowing the political atmosphere of Germany, the source of anxiety and distrust in the present, and possibly of national weakness in the future.

A. C.

\* See the "Leisure Hour" for May, 1879

## HOW MR. JOSEPH POTTER LOST HIS SILVER SPOONS.

### CHAPTER IV.

WHEN Mr. Roland heard the story, which was not, by-the-by, until he re-entered the house, tired of waiting for the fulfilment of Millie's promise to return to him quickly, he chuckled long and heartily, as he could afford to do under the circumstances, at the thought of Joseph's discomfiture when he missed the spoons, and attributed his wife's unusual preoccupation and silence to a slight fit of annoyance at his mirth. For once, however, he told her she really must forgive him for indulging in a good laugh at their unlucky relative. He affirmed, moreover, it might be a useful lesson to that heedless individual, and that he (Ralph) should like to hear what sort of a story he would make of it.

To this end he resolved to look in at Blackfriars the following morning, and after enjoying a little fun at Joseph's expense, to produce the spoons, and soothe the loser's ruffled feelings and wounded dignity by again confiding them to his care.

Mr. Potter, it may be remarked, had been very much ruffled by the untoward incident. It was doubly mortifying to have lost the case, after the special and repeated injunctions he had received respecting it. He had frantically left the train at the first opportunity (to the intense relief of the stout lady and her fellow-passengers), and had returned by the next to Ludgate, in the forlorn hope of hearing something of the packet he remembered having left on the seat. He had gone home to find his Lizzie in a fever of fright and expectation at his non-appearance before; and finally, he had felt so provoked at his own carelessness that he had rashly made up his mind to say nothing about it, but to get another set as near like the one lost as could be made from his description, to keep out of the way of the Rolands until that was accomplished, and to hope that his misfortune and his manoeuvre would alike remain unknown.

He was destined to discover that in small things, as in great, it is best to be open and above board; for this artful little arrangement neatly landed him in the trap laid by his mischief-loving brother-in-law, who, to his consternation, stepped briskly into the office the very next day.

"Good morning, Joe," said he. "Thought I'd give you a look in as I was in the way."

"How unlucky, to be sure," inwardly commented the ungrateful recipient of this favour, but he only answered demurely, "Good morning, Ralph; Millie quite well?"

"Very well, thank you."

An awkward pause, at least it seemed so to the conscious Joseph, who wildly revolved all sorts of subjects in his mind without being able to fix on the safest. No matter, the blow came.

"And how," said Mr. Roland, with oppressive cheerfulness, "did Lizzie like the spoons?"

It is awkward carrying on conversation when one is busily searching among papers. Mr. Potter's head was temporarily hidden by the lid of his desk, but he was understood to reply that "she could not fail to like them."

"Ah, glad of that. Well, Mill and I thought we would come over and have a bit of supper with you to-night if it suits, as we refused Lizzie last week. What do you say?"

Mr. Potter did not know what to say, so he confined his remarks to an awkward "Certainly," and his feeble attempt to conjure up the proper look of pleasure completely upset Ralph's last remnant of gravity.

"It's no use, Joe," he exclaimed, laughing, "you're a bad hand at saying what you don't mean. It doesn't suit you, and you don't want us."

"I assure you," began Joseph, distressed at the implication on his hospitality, "I am always heartily glad to see you."

"But on the present occasion you would be still more heartily glad to see these!" And Mr. Roland produced the unlucky case, and laid it before his astonished companion. Whereupon ensued mutual explanations.

Mr. Potter, measuring his obligation by his relief, was particularly anxious that the finder of his property should be well rewarded, and gave Ralph a message for his wife to the effect that she was to be sure and manage it as she thought best, or if this would be troubling her, to give him the finder's address, and he would see to it himself.

"Poor Mill, I hope she will have got over her vexation by this time. I mustn't laugh at Joe any more," mused Mr. Roland, on his way home, for, to be candid, the fit of preoccupation and silence, satisfactorily accounted for at first, had proved by no means so transitory as previous experience warranted him to expect. That morning at breakfast he could not but notice that Mrs. Roland's brow was still clouded, her thoughts elsewhere.

"If I believed it possible she could sulk, I should say she was doing it," had been Ralph's conclusion, repented as soon as conceived, for was not Millie the sweetest-tempered woman in the world? No, it was anything but that. A headache, a toothache, a passing feeling of depression.

He entered the house. No pleasant face, no cheerful voice welcomed him as usual. In the dining-room Eliza was methodically clearing the table, and, in answer to his question, replied briefly that "mistress was out."

Mr. Roland regarded his prim domestic with some surprise. He had two reasons for it. In the first place, his wife's absence from home at that time was unusual; in the second, Eliza's voice, always a trifle grave and severe, was now so plainly indicative of hidden indignation and smothered wrath. Her small black eyes sparkled so irefully, a certain vibration of the head and shoulders bespoke such inward excitement, which found vent in a sudden and spiteful descent on sundry microscopic crumbs miraculously espied on the carpet, that he began to wonder whether any evil influence in the air had bewitched his womankind, and taken possession of their peaceful abode.

"Your mistress will be home, I suppose, to tea?" He made the suggestion meekly, and as carelessly as possible. There was a certain slight redness about the before-mentioned black eyes that showed they could do something more than sparkle. With masculine terror of a scene, he noted this alarming symptom, and endeavoured, by a conciliatory and collected manner, to counteract it.

"I cannot say, sir, I'm sure. Mistress generally tells me when she'll be back, but she didn't say a word to-day—leastways, on that point." The last with increased vibration and emphasis.

"It is no consequence," said Mr. Roland, so calmly that Eliza, recognising her inability to rouse his curiosity or excite his sympathy, instantly resolved to do without either, and say her say notwithstanding.

It was a very vehement speech for her. Sorry she was, and sorry she should ever be, to leave; but come to it she must, and go through it she would, sooner than put up with all she had that day. What with being told that this wasn't dusted properly; that the best bedroom fire-irons were going to rack and ruin; that the steps, the pride of her heart, might look better; and the pudding was spoiled—she scarcely knew whether she was on her head or her heels; for to give satisfaction had been her aim, and cruelly was she hurt to find she didn't. So sudden, too! It was a regular thunder-clap the way mistress had turned round on her, and snapped her up, and found fault. "Nothing, I give you my word, sir, has gone right this livelong day!" concluded Eliza, and stood bridling and bristling, but evidently relieved by the outburst.

Mr. Roland, on whom it had acted something like a shower-bath, took breath when the infliction was over, and bravely maintained his composure. He simply said, "My good Eliza, I am extremely sorry to hear you are uncomfortable; no one would regret your leaving us more than myself; but these affairs you must really settle with your mistress."

Eliza being disposed of, Mr. Roland betook himself to the garden, anxiously listening for the scroop of the gate that should announce Millie's return.

At last she came. Yes, there was surely some malignant genius about the house—some uncanny force abroad; else why did Mrs. Roland, instead of doffing her outdoor gear, and meeting him with freshly smoothed tresses and her own merry greeting, come straight into the garden, her bonnet still on, her face flushed, her manner unquiet? Why did she enter the summer-house without speaking, and sink so listlessly into her favourite chair? Why, above all, did she open the proceedings with such a deep-drawn sigh, that the beaded fringe on her mantle positively rustled in sympathy? Ralph could not tell. But having successfully staved off one "scene," he had recourse to his former tactics. Biding his time, he quietly ignored for the present what he failed to understand. "Had she a pleasant walk?"

The answer came with deliberation and emphasis. "She certainly had not."

"The fact is, Mill, you are tired, and want your tea," said Mr. Roland, making a move towards the house.

Mrs. Roland stopped him with an intimation that the very mention of tea was an aggravation just now. She "wanted to talk to him."

"With pleasure, my dear," returned Ralph, resigning himself to fate and the opposite chair. "What about?"

"Well, Joseph for one thing."

Ralph laughed, in spite of himself. "Poor old fellow! he took it all in very good part; and upon my word, Mill, I was not down upon him so hard as you would have been yourself. Let him off very mildly, I assure you."

"Then you ought not!" roundly and unex-

pectedly asserted Mrs. Roland. "You ought to have given him a good lecture for his carelessness."

Ralph concealed his astonishment under his unlooked-for rebuff as best he could, and scenting danger in that quarter, dashed off into a subject which could not fail, he thought, to throw oil on the troubled waters.

"By-the-by, I popped in again at Spring and Lacker's to-day, and fancy I saw about the right thing for us. You must run up with me and have a look."

"A victoria?" said Millie, faintly.

"Yes, a little beauty; light and elegant-looking, lined with purple and painted dark blue, picked out with white."

"Ralph, I wish you had not seen it. I wish we had never thought of having one. I believe I wish there was no such thing as a victoria." With which lucid and consistent statement, the little woman drew forth her handkerchief, and tears, real burning tears, fell from her matronly eyes.

"Millie—my dear Mill!" exclaimed Ralph, really alarmed. "What is the matter? are you ill?"

Mrs. Roland cried quietly on for some minutes. Having thus relieved her feelings, she wiped her eyes, and announced herself better. "And now, Ralph," she said, "don't think me very silly and childish for giving way like this, one never knows how hard a disappointment may be to bear until it is experienced, and when we seemed certain of your uncle's annuity it is so tantalising to lose it."

"What are you talking about, Millie? The annuity? We can't lose that, it is ours now by right."

"Yes; but, Ralph"—here came one more sob—"I have found Mrs. Grantley."

"What!" cried Ralph, surprised out of his politeness; "you don't mean that?"

"And she is very, very poor, I am afraid."

A dead silence succeeded.

"And how on earth," said he, presently, "did you hunt her up?"

"It was all through Joseph," she explained. "The young lady who found the spoons was a Miss Broughton, but she happened, just as she was leaving, to tell me her mother's name was Grantley. I haven't had an hour's peace since, for one minute I thought I ought to find out if she were the same person mentioned in uncle's will, the next I persuaded myself there was no occasion to do so, and my best plan was to let the matter drop. And though I could not forget the girl's pale face, and how sadly she told me her mother was an invalid, I almost—let me own it frankly—made up my mind to this. But somehow or other I felt so cross" (here her auditor involuntarily smiled, thinking of Eliza's experience), "and so low-spirited, and so wretched, that this afternoon I suddenly resolved to go and ascertain the truth. And the truth is that this is the Mrs. Grantley beyond all question. You may remember we understood Richard Grantley married a widow; since his death, and until quite lately, she and her daughter have been living in Jersey, where the girl was a governess. A change in the family obliged her to give up her situation, and they were advised to come to London, a step Mrs. Grantley much regrets. She says they find they cannot live so cheaply here. She is a very ladylike woman, but so ill! And oh, Ralph! I surprised them at dinner, and it made my heart ache to see how pinched they were, I could notice it in many ways,"



"I suppose you told them of their connection with us?"

"On the contrary, they are still ignorant of the good fortune they so narrowly missed. I would tell them nothing without first consulting you."

"Doubting what my wishes and course would be under the circumstances?" asked Mr. Roland, bending forward, and looking straight into Millie's face with a mixture of curiosity and affection.

"Doubting nothing, dear Ralph. I knew all along—and perhaps the knowledge accounts for my reticence at first—that you would not hesitate an instant to do whatever is honourable and right. Help me to be generous and unselfish as you are."

The malign influence, the evil genius, had surely passed away; vanishing perhaps with yon dark cloud lightly scudding before the evening breeze. Husband and wife clasped loving hands. Soft breeze and mellow western light, breathing of sweet tranquillity and peace, were once again in unison with their hearts.

The Rolands do not keep their carriage yet. Millie's victoria is still a thing of the future. Not the far-distant future, however, according to present prospects, for business thrives, and Ralph is reported to be a prosperous man. The treasure of a servant remains with them, and would break her heart at the thought of leaving. She and her mistress have rubbed along as smoothly as ever since that one uncomfortable day, which Eliza has been known to cite as an instance of the extraordinary and capricious effect of a sultry atmosphere on the nerves of even the best tempered people.

Mrs. Grantley and Miss Broughton live in a rustic cottage near Bushey Bank. They have no longer any reason to regret Jersey.

Eleanor has no lack of pupils, and their modest annuity seems to them a mine of wealth. It may easily be conceived with what warm and cordial feelings their friendly neighbours are regarded by mother and daughter.

On certain red-letter days they and the Potters and the Rolands dine together; and Mr. Joseph, who has forsaken his dusty office, and already hived much golden honey from the flowery fields of literature, is, at such times, rather apt to recall the adventure which led to their acquaintance; an adventure which, while it would undoubtedly have been in many families a source of direct discord and confusion, has proved to them the seed of generous deeds and kindly sympathy—the first link in a chain of affection and good fellowship which binds the little circle. And nobody knows but Mr. Roland that to one of their number the famous case of spoons was, for a few restless hours, closely allied with a case of conscience.

as to create an alarm to make quotations fall. The Frenchman G. used to indulge in these dishonourable transactions. He has doubled his fortune. One may almost affirm war was made for the purpose. The French Comte M. (full name given in the original), it is said, also speculated, not indeed for himself, but with his mistress's fortune. The thing beginning to ooze out, he died under very suspicious circumstances. If a Minister of Foreign Affairs wished to profit by his position in this way, he must get officious subordinates at the various Legations to accompany official political telegrams with despatches upon the state of the money market. Political telegrams having priority, some twenty or thirty minutes are gained for turning them to account on 'Change. A fast running Jew might do the business in the interval. If report speaks true, there are those who have acted in this way. From £200 to £2,000 may be realised per day. After a couple of years it comes up to a pretty sum. However, my sons shall have no cause to blush for their father. If necessary they may get rich in some other way.

**FREEDOM OF THE CITY.**—Correspondents are perpetually putting questions to us as to the manner in which the Freedom of the City may be obtained. In reply, we print the following particulars: It may be obtained—1st. By servitude, being bound to a Freeman according to the custom of the City, and serving duly and truly at least seven years. 2nd. By patrimony: that is, being the son or daughter (unmarried or a widow) of a Freeman born after the admission of the father. 3rd. Gift of the City, or honorary Freedom. 4th. By redemption or purchase, viz.:—Persons on the Parliamentary register of voters for the City are admitted upon their application to the Chamberlain (either with or without the interference of a company), and without the usual presentation to the Court for an order. Persons not on the Parliamentary register for the City, but who are £10 householders, and rated to the police and other rates, upon producing a certificate (on their application to the Chamberlain) from the beadle or other authority of the Ward that they are so rated, are admitted (with or without the interference of a company) upon the Chamberlain presenting their names to the Court, and obtaining an order for their admission. Persons who are neither on the register nor are rated nor resident in the City are admitted by order of the Court of Aldermen, if free of one of the Livery Companies. All the foregoing pay 5s. on their admission. All other persons are admitted by order of the Court of Common Council, on payment of £2 11s. 8d. The sons of aliens born in England, etc., are now admitted the same as natural-born subjects. All the fees for freedoms are carried to the credit of the Freeman's Orphan School.—*City Press.*

**SCIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE.**—Some recent writers of the materialistic school have used the word science solely with reference to the knowledge of the material world; as if the world of mind did not also belong to science and philosophy. "The use of the word 'scientia,'" says Mr. Ruskin, "as if it differed from 'knowledge,' is a modern barbarism, enhanced usually by the assumption that the knowledge of the difference between acids and alkalis is a more respectable one than that of the difference between vice and virtue."

**CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.**—The law journals lately reported the proceedings in a suit for the administration of the estate of the late Dr. Fraser, of Hampstead, who left a large amount of property to be distributed among various charities. One clause of the will was to this effect (we quote from the "Times"), "that he had previously left £10,000 to the Senatus Academicus of the University of Edinburgh, for the purpose of founding certain bursaries connected with the medical profession, but having learnt that the horrible and atrocious practice prevailed there of performing unspeakably cruel operations and experiments on living animals, he now by his will cancelled the bequest, and desired to benefit the Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to a similar extent, since he could not reconcile it with his feelings to encourage, however remotely, the barbarous practice of vivisection."

**RUSSIA AND ENGLAND.**—Professor Monier Williams, in a recent lecture on Afghanistan before the University of Oxford, after describing that country, thus spoke of Russia:—"Already, according to Professor Vambery, has Russia pushed her frontier to a point within 400 miles of our territory. Already she occupies the Upper Oxus, the lower course of which she is said to have just changed to its old bed, and made to flow into the Caspian Sea, so as to enable her ships to navigate its waters almost to the very borders of Afghanistan. Already she is creeping onwards from the south shore of the Caspian, intent on occupying Herat, and ultimately absorbing Persia. For let us

## Varieties.

**BISMARCK ON STOCK EXCHANGE SPECULATION.**—A diplomatist's forecast of coming events is very imperfect. Even if an event does fall out as he anticipated, its effect upon the Exchange is frequently retarded by other circumstances. In no case can the date of the reaction upon the Bourse be calculated with certainty. Of course it makes a difference if a man stoops so low

not forget," said the Professor, in conclusion, "that Russia is a semi-Oriental, if not a semi-barbarous Power. Her system assimilates itself far more readily than ours to the present condition of the Asiatic mind. It is not over just, it is not over pure, it is not over virtuous, yet it brings with it the manifest advantages of organised government and security of property. Hence Russia's advance is often welcomed in Asia as a boon where ours is deprecated as a grievance. And let us not be blind: Russia is advancing. True, she has not yet permanently occupied Khiva and Bokhara, yet the Khans of those places are as much under her thumb as the protected States of India are under ours. Russian troops have already occupied Samarcand, and will soon be pushed to Merv and Balkh. Once at Merv, it will be easy for them to march on Herat through the pass formed by the Heri-rud river. Once at Balkh, it will be easy for them to enter Cabul by the Bamian Pass. Do we wonder that the voices of masterly activity are found at present to prevail? Reams of paper may still be wasted on attempts to solve the Central Asiatic question, but one point must stand out sharp above the confusion of conflicting views, one stubborn fact must always be faced by every statesman who dreams of the final adjustment of scientific frontiers—namely, that nothing can prevent Afghanistan and Persia from crumbling to pieces between the advancing forces of two gigantic empires like England and Russia. As soon might you expect two bushels of loose grain to withstand the pressure of two massive millstones. The whole question really resolves itself into one simple problem. Are we to occupy Afghanistan, and to meet Russia at the Hindu Kush on the one side, and then, advancing into Persia from the Persian Gulf on the other, draw a line from the Caspian to a point north of Herat, and say, 'Thus far shalt thou go and no farther,' or are we to stop for ever at Jellalabad, Quetta, or perhaps Candahar? Without attempting an answer to this question, we may be allowed to express our fears that it will be found impossible to apply the laws of social morality as between man and man, and even the laws of political and international morality as between nation and nation, to two mighty empires, each gravitating towards the other with irresistible force, and each intensely conscious that self-preservation depends on progress." Professor Monier Williams expresses what is the too general tone of thought about Russia. If conflict is the inevitable result of contact, it is a sad prospect for the world's progress. It does not need the military insight of Baron Jomini to announce the speedy contact of Russia and the British empire. But why need this contact lead to war any more than the contact of the two great empires of Russia and Germany?

**NEW RIVER SHARES.**—At the Auction Mart lately, Messrs. Fox and Bousfield offered to auction freehold estates in the New River Company, comprising two-fifths of a king's share, one-eighth of an adventurer's share, and thirty-one £100 shares (paid up). The adventurer's share realised at the rate of nearly £91,000 per share; the king's share at the rate of £88,200 per share; and the £100 shares sold at an average price of £310 per share.

**"THE WORLD IS MY PARISH."**—Dean Stanley, referring to this memorable saying of John Wesley, remarked that a good motto also is, "My parish is my world." And there is no doubt that he who sticks to his own field, and tills it best, does best for the field of the world.

**TURNER'S SNOWSTORM.**—Mr. Ruskin, in his "Notes on the Turner Collection at Marlborough House, 1856-7," told the following anecdote:—"In the year 1842 he (Turner) exhibited a picture in the Academy, thus described in the catalogue—'Snowstorm—Steamboat off a harbour mouth making signals and going by the lead. The author was in this storm the night the Ariel left Harwich.' This picture was described by some of the critics of the day as a mass of 'soapsuds and whitewash.' Turner was passing the evening at my father's house on the day this criticism came out, and after dinner, sitting in his arm-chair by the fire, I heard him muttering low to himself at intervals, 'Soapsuds and whitewash,' again and again and again. At last I went to him, asking why he minded what they said? Then he burst out, 'Soapsuds and whitewash! What would they have? I wonder what they think the sea's like. I wish they had been in it.'"

**WINE-TESTING BY PHOTOGRAPHY.**—It is stated that photography is now used as a help to wine-testing; a few drops being applied to a cardboard, and photographs taken of the stain, a practised eye can, with the microscope, tell the condition of the bulk of the wine. Even without the minute examination of

chemical and physical appearances by the microscope, the eye is often a surer guide than the palate in testing wine. The dealers of the Bordeaux, for instance, in busy seasons have so many articles to sample that their sense of taste soon loses its sensibility, and the palate refuses to serve them, but the eye will preserve its delicate discriminating power unimpaired for days and days together.

**METCHNIKOFF'S "JAPAN."**—An important work, by M. Léon Metchnikoff, "L'Empire Japonais," is being published at Geneva. The work is divided into four parts—the land, the people, its history, and its present condition; it contains illustrations, mostly drawn by the author himself, as well as a map of Japan, on which the orthography of the Japanese names appears correct for the first time. Former authors often reproduced the names according to the defective pronunciation of the coolies of Yokohama, so that the Japanese themselves sometimes could not guess the names given on our maps. M. Metchnikoff reproduces correctly the idiom of Kioto, which is the Tuscany of Japan. Few Europeans have so thorough knowledge of the language and the life of the Japanese.

**SKINS USED FOR LADIES' CLOAKS.**—When looking in the shop windows I have often wondered what skins are used for lining ladies' cloaks. These fur-lined cloaks just now are very abundant and fashionable. My friend, Mr. Keilich, furrier, tells me that the skins used for this purpose are of various kinds. The commonest of all is white rabbits'; these are not English, but imported from Lissa, in Poland, where they are dressed by the furriers, and manufactured into linings for cloaks. It is not certain whether these skins are from wild or tame rabbits. As many thousand skins are annually used, it is very probable that they are domestic rabbits, bred for the purpose. Besides rabbit skins, many cloaks are lined with what are called "squirrel bellies." These are literally bellies of squirrels. These animals are skinned in a peculiar manner, so as to make the most of the fur. The squirrels used for this purpose are of various kinds and prices. The most expensive squirrel is the Siberian squirrel. The general colour of this is blue; some light blue, some dark blue. The dark blue are the most valuable, particularly if it is void of the red stripe down the back. These squirrels are killed by thousands in Siberia; they are mostly shot with a small bullet. Those from Sweden and Norway are caught in traps—probably pitfalls baited with food; they are also intercepted when in the act of migrating. The Swedish squirrels are very large. Some of the squirrel skins are of a red colour; these are the same squirrel in the summer dress. Squirrels are also imported in large numbers, especially from Kasan, in Russia, but they are rather inferior to other sorts. There are various modes of dressing squirrel skins. The Russian skins are pickled in salt, and in consequence are apt to feel damp in wet weather. They do very well in Russia, as the weather there is always dry. In this country the skins are dressed with butter or lard, and it is a very remarkable thing that the Russian furriers cannot use butter-dressed skins because in Russia the skins thus prepared become quite hard in very cold weather. For years past the trade of dressing squirrel-skins has had its head-quarters in Saxony, principally at the town of Weissenfels. Leipzig is celebrated for its fur market, especially at Easter, when the great fair takes place. From Leipzig furs are sent to China, Russia, Turkey, Greece, etc.—in fact, all over the world. Large numbers of common wild rabbit skins and silver greys are exported from England for use in Russia. Cats are largely cultivated in Holland, especially for their skins. The fur of the Dutch cat is very long and soft as compared to the English cat, the fur of which is hard and wiry. There is some secrecy as to how the cats in Holland are fed; it is possible that they are fed on fish. The best Dutch cats are black. A good skin of jet-black colour is worth half-a-guinea. The Dutch cat-killers have a most peculiar and clever way of killing their cats. It is a fallacy to suppose that cats are skinned alive. In the first place, to skin a cat when alive would be utterly impossible; and, secondly, it does not make any difference in the quality of the skin. The origin of the fallacy is probably that a cat is easier skinned immediately after death than if allowed to become rigid. It is very remarkable how fashions set by English ladies influence wild and tame animals even in the most distant parts of the world. I am very glad the ladies have made cats fashionable, as at last some use is found for these animals, which, being untaxed, are so abundant that any night, and in any weather, cats—many of them half-starved—swarm in the London streets, and the poorer the neighbourhood the more abundant are the cats.—*Frank Buckland, in "Land and Water."*